



Press Release

Press Release Announcement -- May 15, 2002 --- For Immediate Use

Pennsylvania Potato Stocks Down 35 Percent in May

HARRISBURG –Total potato stocks stored in Pennsylvania on May 1, 2002 were 170,000 cwt., 35 percent less than the previous month, and 5 percent of the total fall potato crop, 3,173,000 cwt., according to the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service. Of this amount, 150,000 cwt. were stored in processor's facilities, 88 percent of the total stocks.

Stocks are defined as the quantity (whether sold or not) remaining in storage for all purposes and uses, including shrinkage and waste and other losses that occur after the date of each report. Stocks may also include potatoes produced in other states. For all states, sales of fall potatoes for all purposes for the past five years averaged 90.6 percent of the total fall production. Shrinkage, loss and home use account for the remaining 9.4 percent. Most seed for use the following year is on hand but remains as part of stocks until planted.

Storage of fall potatoes in the **15 major states** totaled 91.1 million cwt., down 17 percent from a year earlier but less than 5 percent above 2000. Storage on May 1 accounted for 23 percent of fall production, down 1 percent from last year. Disappearance, at 303 million cwt., is down 13 percent from last year, the lowest since 1992. April disappearance of 37.8 million cwt. is down 15 percent from a year ago and 9 percent below 2000. Shrinkage and loss totaled 24.4 million cwt., down 32 percent from one year ago and 17 percent below two years ago.

Processing usage in the 9 major processing states totaled 148 million cwt. so far this season, down 13 percent from one year earlier and 11 percent below two years earlier. In April, processors used 16.5 million cwt., 12 percent less than year ago and 9 percent fewer than two years ago.

Western States held 70.9 million cwt of potatoes in storage on May 1, 2002, down 19 percent from last year and 4 percent above 2000. Idaho's potato stocks are down 14 percent from a year ago, while Washington is down 16 percent and Oregon is off 35 percent. Colorado's stocks are down 31 percent and Montana's fell 7 percent short of a year ago. California's potato holdings are down 86 percent from a year ago. **Central States** accounted for 17.1 million cwt of potato stocks this May 1, down 2 percent from 2001 but 22 percent above 2000. North Dakota's stocks are up 12 percent and Wisconsin's holdings are 21 percent above this date last year. Michigan's potato stocks are down 43 percent from last year but Minnesota's are off 26 percent from a year ago. Combined Nebraska and Ohio stocks are 12 percent below a year ago.

Eastern States stored 3.2 million cwt of potatoes on May 1, 2002, down 25 percent from a year ago and 31 percent below two years ago. Maine's holdings are down 25 percent from last year.